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ABSTRACT

To prepare teachers for working with diverse student populations, teacher education reform must advance from a course in multicultural education to the level of an organized and integrated component of the teacher education curriculum. This roundtable discussion identifies the major principles at issue in bringing about such a change in the teacher education model. The roundtable participants were educators from colleges, universities, and school districts representing Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah. The report follows the structure of the roundtable itself in which leaders made a presentation and then led discussion on three key topics: (1) "Cultural Patterns Affecting Teacher and Student Expectations" (A. Anderson and E. Diaz); (2) "Matching Instructional Strategies with Purposes for Diverse Settings" (M. Berg); and (3) "Effective Teachers of Diverse Students" (A. Watkins). A conclusion drawn from the roundtable is that three principles must underscore the teacher education program: teacher preparation is an all-university responsibility; to function effectively, teachers must exhibit willingness to select instructional materials and methods that are free of racial, sexual, and ethnic bias; and the commitment to educating minority youth must be unequivocal. (AMH)

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ROUNDTABLE

The Challenge -- Preparing Teachers For Diverse Populations

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ROUNDTABLE REPORT

The Challenge — Preparing Teachers for Diverse Student Populations

SEPTEMBER 1988

Edited by

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Through a grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development and the California State University are collaborating to improve schools and classrooms in California. Through that partnership, the Southern Service Center has been established as an extension of the Far West Laboratory in Southern California. The Southern Service Center plays a coordinative role between school districts, county offices, California State University campuses, and other institutions of higher education.

The basic purposes of the Southern Service Center are: (a) to improve the efficiency of the Laboratory's work in Southern California, and (b) to develop connections and working relationships between the Laboratory and California State University that strengthen their capability for effective joint actions. The Center's emphasis is on the improvement of teacher education and the achievements of minority students.

In an effort to identify the most critical issues associated with the preparation of teachers for diverse student populations, a Regional Advisory Committee was established representing Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah. Under the direction of the Regional Advisory Committee, a Roundtable was held to discuss issues, strategies and research relevant to improving teacher preparations for settings with a cultural mix of students. This report synthesizes those discussions.

A major function of the Southern Service Center is the dissemination of information regarding school improvement projects and activities. The Regional Advisory Committee anticipates that this report will be useful to chief school officers, representatives from higher education, and others as they formulate strategies for improving teacher preparation programs.

We solicit your responses regarding the usefulness of this report and welcome your comments and suggestions for its improvement.

Roger Dash, Ed.D
Director

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INTRODUCTION

Educators from colleges, universities, and school districts representing Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah convened in the fall of 1987 for a roundtable discussion sponsored by the Southern Service Center of Far West Laboratory. The two-day meeting focused on issues, strategies, and research relevant to improving the preparation of teachers who work with culturally diverse students. This roundtable, the first in a series of forums, sought to lay a solid foundation for practitioners in universities and school districts to work together in meeting the instructional challenges presented by the growing ethnic and cultural diversity of today's students.

These challenges go well beyond the problem of language to include differences in cultural norms, values, and expectations. The 34 participants, including university deans and professors, district superintendents and principals, framed the major issues that must be addressed in order to seize the opportunity that exists at this critical point in education.

Crises and Opportunity

The failure of schooling to enable all children to enjoy equal education opportunity regardless of race and ethnocultural background is a major crisis for the United States. The denial of equal educational opportunity to many Black, Hispanic and Native American youth, which has long characterized schooling in this country, today grows even more serious as the population becomes increasingly diverse. Census data and school enrollment reports show a significant shift in the racial/ethnic makeup of both the general and school populations nationwide.

Perhaps the most dramatic of the population changes in the United States are occurring in the Southwest. Within a very short time in California, it is projected that Spanish will replace English as the most commonly spoken language. California also has a growing and

highly diverse Asian-American population. For the first time in 1988-89, more minority than Anglo students are now enrolled in California public schools. Projects for the general population indicate that by the year 2000, California will be the first "minority-majority" state.

Concurrent with the increasing population of Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans is their decreasing representation in higher education, teacher-training programs and teaching faculties. While college enrollments have grown, a California State Department of Education study reveals that the low proportions of Black and Hispanic high school graduates in college have changed little during the 1980s. A study by Astin (1982) found that fewer students of color are selecting the teaching profession as a career. Of all the teacher-training candidates applying for admission to teacher programs in the California State University in September, 1986, only 3 percent were Black and only 5 percent Hispanic.

These demographic changes and the critical need for effective schools that succeed in educating this country's students requires that *all* teachers be better prepared to effectively teach *all* students. We can no longer assume that an effective teaching performance in one environment assures equal accomplishment elsewhere. Teacher education reform must advance the preparation of teachers for working with diverse student populations from a single course in "multicultural education" to the level of an organized and integrated component of the overall teacher-training curriculum.

The teacher education model has to be changed. The opportunity before us is to develop educational programs that truly are multicultural, liberating the human potential in every child and promoting respect for self and for diversity within this society.

The roundtable discussion, summarized in the pages that follow, identifies the major principles at issue in bringing about this change, setting the stage for continuing interaction among educators from the entire Western region.

This report follows the structure of the roundtable itself, in which leaders first made a brief presentation, then led open discussion on three key topics. Dr. Alonzo Anderson from the University of California at San Diego began with "Cultural Patterns Affecting Teacher and Student Expectations." Dr. Esteban Diaz from California State University, San Bernardino added to this topic before the discussion period. Next, Dr. Marlowe Berg spoke on "Matching Instructional Strategies with Purposes for Diverse Settings." Discussion of effective instructional strategies led naturally into the final presentation, "Competencies of Effective Teachers of Diverse Student Populations." Dr. Alice Watkins of California State University, Los Angeles gave the presentation and led the discussion. Dr. Josie Bain, Education Professional in Residence at the University of California, Los Angeles, closed the roundtable with a call to move quickly from words into effective action.

NOTE: Presentations in this report are edited versions using the presenters' own words for the most part. Throughout this roundtable report, important general points and practical suggestions are italicized. A bibliography for all presentations is also included.

CULTURAL PATTERNS AFFECTING TEACHER AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

DR. ALONZO ANDERSON

A discussion of the cultural patterns affecting teacher and student expectations is a complex undertaking. Discussing any one of the elements involved -- cultural patterns, teacher's or students' expectations -- is a challenge. Focusing on these together implies that if we come to understand the complexity of these elements interacting in the classroom setting, we will be able to improve the education for ethnically, culturally or linguistically diverse student populations.

Addressing student and teacher expectations straightforwardly challenges us to confront the fact that we have all been raised and educated in a society which encourages practices that both create and maintain ethnic and sexual biases. The same Puritan values that gave us the goals of hard work, achievement, and material success also taught us individualism and Anglo-male centrism. These values represent an ideology that has influenced us and our education practices.

The sociohistorical approach of Vygotsky is useful in both understanding and preparing teachers to effectively manage cultural diversity in the classroom. He viewed the development of higher psychological processes (cognition) as being fundamentally social in nature. Culture thus plays a highly important role in cognitive development because it shapes both the teacher's and the student's experiences and forms of social interactions.

Based on Vygotsky's ideas, we can organize the social context where new skills are learned in the form of a zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is a metaphor for the range between what a child can do independently and what a child can do with the help of others. The zone links the two planes, interpsychological and intrapsychological.

In education, assessing students' initial level of knowledge is accepted as important so instruction can be aimed at a slightly more advanced level. If the work is too easy, children do not learn. Ideally, instruction is aimed at the intermediate "soft spot" where learning can be maximized. In this way, education **leads** development.

The ZPD is adjusted upward as the learner develops. This lets the learner move toward independent functioning by internalizing how the teacher regulates the learner's behavior. The learner internalizes the **kind of help** others have provided, now using the same means to direct him- or herself.

The specific skills that the culture values and arranges for have social origins in two senses. First, students learn the actual **procedures** through social interaction: how to change a tire, comfort a baby, tell a story. In addition, the **motivation** for these skills originates socially. (See McNamee in press.)

Vygotsky used the ZPD to assess educational practices as well as individuals. Like clinical teaching, the ZPD allows assessment of intrapsychological functioning within the interpsychological realm where cognitive growth occurs. (Wertsch 1985)

The ZPD in Teaching

Based on Vygotskian theories and studies of teaching, we can extract two essential practices key to effective teaching, especially teaching ethnically and linguistically diverse students: (1) *A teacher must have a wide variety of teaching strategies and practices at hand to draw on, according to the needs of the students, and* (2) *the teacher must be able to apply these strategies effectively to create a zone of proximal development where learning can take place.*

The first point is well stated by Jordan (1980, 7): "What is being advocated here is that the selection of teaching practices be informed by knowledge of children's cultural background . . . . "What is advocated is the consideration of the full range of good educational practice and a

selection from that range based partly on the fit of the selected practices with the cultural background of the children to be served."

Culture is important in the intellectual development of students, but teachers need not learn a specific curriculum or teaching style for each cultural group. This would be an impossible task. Rather, academic preparation must inform potential teachers about the patterns of culture, including their own, and how these can influence the teaching-learning process.

Teacher's Role in Constructing a ZPD

The teacher must work to establish a shared understanding of the teaching-learning situation. This allows for creating a zone of proximal development. Wertsch (1985, 161) states: "Because an adult and a child . . . often bring divergent situation definitions to a task setting, they may be confronted with severe problems of establishing and maintaining intersubjectivity . . . The adult tries to help the child define the task setting in a new, culturally appropriate way." Intersubjectivity is achieved through language and joint activity, which allow each participant to transcend what Rommetveit (1979) called different "private worlds" to reach a temporarily shared social world.

So often, curriculum planners develop concepts, strategies and methodologies with an ethnocentrism that ignores the cultural perspective of the students. As educators, we seldom question the impact that mainstream American culture and Anglo-European culture have on teacher expectations or the dynamics or process of the classroom lesson. It is important for us to remember that at the time of the public school movement there was a parallel influence in existence -- the eugenics movement. So, as consideration was being given to whom should be educated and under what circumstances, a parallel dialogue questioned who had intelligence and who could use that intelligence. Some argued that only certain people had intelligence, specifically Anglo males. Those dated notions are still somewhat reflected in education today, including the assumptions and expectations teachers take with them into the classroom, namely, that

some students are not capable of learning. Many times these assumptions are based on test results. But are poor test results due to genetic inferiority or pedagogical methods?

We must provide teachers with more learning theory -- teach them how and under what circumstances people learn. Within teacher preparation programs, we need theoretical frameworks that recognize the value of cultural differences and the importance of a student's experiences outside formal education. It is not enough to only consider the cultural differences of children; we must also understand what Anglo teachers have experienced being Anglos and the implications their experience has for the teaching-learning interaction.

In contrast to the past, researchers have recently been focusing on how schools can capitalize on cultural practices by incorporating them into classroom activities and lessons. Such attempts to "match" culture with educational activities are relatively new, and their effectiveness remains to be tested longitudinally. Still, increasing evidence points to their effectiveness in promoting academic achievement. We must also go on to ask and empirically explore a vital question: To what extent is "matching" appropriate and when does it become counterproductive?

One issue of major importance is the understanding of what "culture" is and what its impact is on educational outcomes. No genuine monolithic culture exists in minority communities, according to research. In a classroom we may talk about the rituals and practices of certain cultures, but in reality the cultural aspects of peoples' behavior are modified by their interaction with the dominant culture. Studies of recent immigrants from Mexico show that what determines the lifestyle they choose to pursue or how they perceive themselves is strongly influenced by major institutions, particularly schools. We need to appreciate more the impact that the local community, the local context, in interaction with major institutions, has on developing their new sense of identify -- how they perceive themselves. Education thus plays a transformative role and basically creates a new monolithic culture.

We also need to understand the relationship between teacher and learner much better -- especially with students from diverse ethnic and racial groups. Our view is that learning is essentially context-specific. Thus, effective learning must take into account the experiences children bring to the classroom. While some studies (Laosa 1982) indicate cultural differences in learning styles, by and large these are mitigated by socioeconomic status indicators -- especially the educational level of the mother. However, the **majority** of these children come from homes where parents have minimal levels of education and remain trapped in a cycle of poverty. To help these students break the vicious cycle, we need to prepare teachers to understand: (1) the teaching-learning process in

relation to the experiences of these children; and (2) this as a dynamic interactive process, in which teacher and students negotiate the outcomes of classroom lessons.

Severely restricted by law, teacher certification usually involves only a foundations and a reading methods course before student teaching. This supervised on-the-job training is valuable but probably too short to prepare teachers well enough for the diverse students they will face in their classrooms. Student teachers need training that combines theory and practice concurrently, and our teacher-training programs need to be structured to let students integrate theory with the actual experience in classrooms and the community. To accomplish this, a well-coordinated relationship is necessary among the university, schools, and community. Long-term, well-articulated ties among university, schools, and community would also give working teachers an avenue for inservice training that addresses current community-school needs or problems. Toward this end, a field site office was established in San Diego (Diaz *et al.* 1986) to permit strong interaction between student families and school district personnel and to obtain key community information. That information was passed back to teachers and used to **train** them in its classroom application. This arrangement fostered equity, as all involved evaluated the impact and contributed something for the benefit received. University researchers and teacher trainers worked hard to apply the results as quickly and as appropriately as possible in the school and community. Teachers at the field site spent time in the community learning about it and acquiring additional skills for more effective work with their students. Community families found a vehicle to voice their concerns and provide useful information in more meaningful ways than by simply serving on advisory committees or PTA groups. Parents felt more like partners, and teachers realized that these parents really cared about the welfare of their children.

Discussion

Participants exchanged views on issues related to perceptions, assumptions, and myths about different cultures. Early on, some suggested that teacher training should avoid emphasizing different cultures -- with one dominant white culture and other minority cultures. Because values are attached to these distinctions that in turn influence teacher expectations, teachers tend to attribute negative behavior inaccurately to only nonwhite children. *More important, a monolithic culture does not exist among minorities.* Thus, referring to *American* culture will limit assigning values to different cultures, and teachers will tend to expect the same from all youngsters.

Several participants differed sharply on this recommendation of de-emphasizing cultural differences during teacher training. They felt students arrived on campus with a set mental ranking of different cultures based on current assumptions in the society at large. Thus, the university should recognize these biases and address cultural differences as a part of the teacher preparation programs, presenting material to de-emphasize the negative attitudes associated with cultural differences and to identify and accentuate the positive values inherent in those difference. *We must emphasize the dynamic, interactive, changing nature of culture and guard against oversimplification.*

Participants also urged that we no longer dodge the fundamental issues of culture. Especially, we must objectively and honestly -- regardless of the pain involved -- examine the culture of Anglo-Americans and how our experiences in this culture shape our views of reality. The status hierarchy created long ago has been subtly but persistently reinforced. Thus, the dominant culture influences the way schools are organized. Teachers must develop an understanding of systems of oppression so they recognize that the school replicates the broader society. We need to know and understand how socialization develops attitudes in teachers and in children before we can train for effective teaching. The university is responsible for developing

awareness in prospective teachers so that they become sensitized to their own internal cultural views.

Many fine universities have already developed outstanding teacher training programs that deal with cultural differences -- on paper. In practice, prospective teachers learn something quite different; and though excellent materials exist, they are not universally used. University faculty itself often resists, lacking a commitment to appreciating differing cultures. *Sensitizing university faculty is the essential first step.* Because poor development and implementation has to date characterized any curriculum that deals effectively with racial, gender and ethnic differences, a preference for avoiding these tough issues has emerged. This encourages the danger of retreating to the idea that all we need is good teaching. The ethnicity of most teacher educators should in itself prompt us to wonder about their ability to adequately teach prospective teachers' respect for cultural differences that are not Anglo-based.

Teaching courses on cultural diversity is not enough. Almost everyone has bought into the costly research findings that minority children cannot learn. Data from Region C, Los Angeles Unified School District, show the education results when teachers believe minority students cannot learn as well as Anglo students. The California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS, Form U) was administered to all compensatory education students. Significantly, kindergarten students were the only grade level in Region C that scored above the district average. Thus, based on standardized test scores, students are coming into Region C performing above district average, but by the first grade they perform 10 points below the district average.

Yet the results of an improved teacher education program should not be based on test scores. We would make a tragic mistake if we define education as better test scores. To do this flies in the face of reality and deifies testing programs. Our goal should be to develop socially, emotionally and intellectually healthy human beings who respect themselves and are comfortable with cultural diversity. Universities and school districts should try to recruit people into

teaching and administration proportionate in ethnic backgrounds and cultures to the student population. *They must also develop more precise screening mechanisms for recruits and teachers who may eventually have problems with culturally diverse students.* Participants acknowledge that with population growth and funding decreases we face a major crisis, but they favored the view that a momentous crises can provide a great opportunity. The opportunity rests in true multicultural educational programs.

MATCHING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES WITH PURPOSES FOR DIVERSE SETTINGS

DR. MARLOWE BERG

Strategies and Skills

Within three to five years, over 100,000 new teachers are likely to be needed in California schools. Also very shortly, Spanish will become the most commonly spoken language in California. Add a growing Asian population to this scenario, and it is clear that the 100,000 new teachers must learn to work with students whose first language is not English. In fact, with such a large population of limited-English or non-English speaking students, *all* teachers will have to acquire competence in this critical area. Educators today are challenged to prepare new teachers to work competently and comfortably with students from diverse ethnic and cultural settings. Teachers who return to the campus comment on the gap between what is taught at the university and what happens in the classroom. Often this occurs because of differences in communication, conceptualization and terminology. The major remedy is to come together and define the practices. The impetus for a field-based training center is to align curriculum with actual experiences and provide a historic approach to teacher training.

Several teacher training institutions are currently working with the schools to offer new teachers opportunities to develop skills in a realistic diverse setting with students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. A field-based training site, the Model Education Center (MEC), was established through the joint efforts of the Cajon Valley School District and the College of Education at San Diego State University. The goals of the Center include: (1) applying school effectiveness research to enhance student education by improving student achievement and school environment; (2) strengthening of Cajon Valley teachers' skills by teaching at the MEC and/or taking part in inservice activities; and (3) providing on-site training for student teachers and graduate students that models principles identified with effective schools. The MEC is also a magnet

school offering an ESL program for Asian-American students. Other ethnic minorities represented include American Indian, Filipino, Hispanic, and Black.

Student teachers at the MEC got a firsthand chance to experience language barriers when they hosted a group of non-English speaking Japanese educators. Only minutes before their arrival did the student-teachers learn that the delegation spoke no English and used an interpreter. The meeting was a success, but the language barrier created tension. This is the same kind of tension a teacher could feel confronting many students with limited or no English. What stress messages does that teacher send the students? What specific teacher training can reduce the tension and support the students' learning needs?

Areas identified in the literature as meeting the learning needs of non-English or limited-English speaking students include social interaction, behavior and, of course, language. Hakuta and Gould (1987) found, in surveying districts with diverse students, that every district listed "developing the student's English to the level of participation in all classrooms" as an instructional goal. Ninety percent also targeted the development of other academic skills concurrently with the students' language development. Only 15 percent listed maintaining the students' first language as a goal. Boyer (1983) concluded that if a child is not empowered linguistically, it's almost impossible to compensate for this failure later on.

The literature is less clear on teaching methodologies that are most effective in meeting the students' language needs. One much-reviewed focus is the natural approach to language acquisition based on the work of Krashen and his colleagues. When surveying second language practices for non-English speaking students, McLaughlin (1987) identified: (1) *submersion* programs emphasizing dialogues and drills on grammatical structures; (2) *total immersion using* the Canadian experience as a model; (3) *total physical response techniques designed* to develop comprehension through physical activity; (4) *the natural approach*; and (5) *a functional approach*, helping students on English skills that are specifically necessary for school success.

An educational obligation is emerging: We must ask ourselves what teachers need to be effective with students from diverse settings and what modifications in the system we must make to train people for this near future?

Feedback and Supervision

Professional growth occurs in many ways. In education, we have a sense that content and methodology are what student teachers need. But a survey of new teachers revealed that they considered student teaching their most important training experience. The question we may need to ask is: What kind of feedback and supervision best helps student teachers function effectively with children from diverse backgrounds?

The Chancellor's Office of the California State University System funded a project to investigate redefining supervision for student teachers working with limited-English or non-English speaking students. The project prepared student teachers and supervisors to use a curriculum which the San Diego Unified School District developed, based on the work of Krashen and associates, entitled *English for Limited-English Proficient Students* (ELEPS). Student teachers worked in teams, alternating teaching lessons and coaching one another in the process. Supervisors were trained in using a modified form of clinical supervision in this context with the student teachers. Either structured or open-ended observation feedback forms that followed Goldhammer's approach to clinical supervision were field tested.

Based on data collected using pre-post tests, student teachers reported more positive attitudes toward working with diverse ethnic and cultural groups after training in and use of the ELEPS curriculum. They also felt they knew more about language acquisition and its classroom applications. Student teachers requested more directive feedback from supervisors when teaching ELEPS lessons, and they preferred the feedback form that offered a more structured approach to supervision.

The questions before us are: What is currently emerging in the area of feedback and supervision models for use with people who may be new to working with ethnically, linguistically or culturally diverse students? How might we begin to reshape teacher education programs to incorporate what seem to be promising instruction and supervision practices?

Discussion

Participants discussed the validity of the idea that identifiable unique strategies and skills can lead to effective teaching in diverse settings. Perhaps educators have put too much emphasis on different learning styles among different ethnic groups. It may be that sound teaching methodology and proven learning principles would be effective in most settings. *General agreement centered on the perception that certain special teaching strategies and/or skills do foster academic achievement among diverse student populations.* Preferred learning modes do exist among students, and the teacher must identify those preferred learning modes for his/her students. *But teachers need not learn a specific curriculum or teaching style for each cultural group. As stated, a teacher needs to have a wide variety of accessible teaching strategies to draw from based on the students' needs*

Discussion then moved to the perceived learning abilities of minorities. Participants felt that the education of nonwhite children is based on a model that assumes the need for remediation due to inferior skills. A multibillion dollar business that supports this model will not be easily dismantled because every agency has bought into it. To address the needs of nonwhite children and find out why they have not succeeded in American schools will require studying highly complex sociological, economic, and political issues.

Teachers often enter the diverse student settings with a predisposition that these students cannot learn. But only 2 to 5 percent of this country's children cannot learn in the regular classroom due to a special handicap. The others can learn and be taught.

It is paramount to identify and understand the cultural similarities and differences students bring to school. Then the teacher can compare that information with her/his own cultural experiences and the general culture of the school. Such knowledge will help the teacher implement classroom activities that foster compatible interactions with the students. This will assist the teacher in presenting a nonbiased curriculum that integrates both school and community cultures. A final essential strategy is to involve the community and parents in the education process.

The teacher should focus on instructional strategies that allow cultural differences to emerge naturally in the classroom and that *encourage students* to share *aspects of their culture as a part of the lesson* rather than "now we are going to have a lecture on different cultures." *Increasing evidence shows that matching cultural practices with educational activities effectively promotes academic achievement.*

Selecting appropriate teaching methodologies and materials surfaced as areas critical to effective teaching in diverse student settings. Though student teachers are taught methodologies and learning principles, they often misapply both in the classroom. "Individualized instruction," "clustering" and "age-appropriate materials" are terms beginning teachers often misunderstand or misimplement. Their theoretical understanding may be perfect, but the application or materials selected may not fit the specific occasion.

The educational structure pushes teachers toward conforming or toward using inappropriate instructional materials. Schools are structured like factories with controls over input as well as output. The educational system should empower teachers to exercise more flexibility in presenting appropriate materials.

Student teachers are also taught that motivation is vital to the learning process, but beginning teachers often conduct a motivating exercise that has no relationship to the lesson being taught. Often a teacher knew and followed all the right steps in conducting a motivating exercise, but did not grasp the big picture of how the steps all built on each other.

According to the zone of proximal development theory, the things *and activities in the world are motivating. From that point of view, all* students are already motivated, and one need not duplicate this. But they may not be motivated about the things a teacher wants them to be motivated about when the teacher wants them to be motivated. *The teacher's challenge is to discover what motivates the student and then to appropriate that for the learning process.*

Participants reviewed the issue of testing and the importance accorded tests. Many expressed concern for the dangers accompanying a blind reverence for test results. Yet whether we like it or not, this is a test-driven society! What matters most is what is *done* with the test information. Variations of opinions included the idea that test scores are a function of good instruction or poor instruction. But then someone questioned how a teacher can be blamed for poor test results if the student comes to the classroom not fluent in English. If an entire school of students cannot read, participants agreed that fundamental problems exist at that school. Also, to have every student on or above grade level is a realistic goal.

Many participants believed class size was a major variable in student achievement. One participant noted, though, that most research indicates class size is not highly significant in student achievement.

Teacher education and preparation is a long series of activities, and preservice is only the beginning. Continuing activities should include coaching on strategies and maintaining high performance by continually honing skills and instructional strategies. *Student teachers need classes that combine theory and practice concurrently.* Teacher-training programs should be structured to let students integrate theory with classroom and community experience from the outset.

EFFECTIVE TEACHERS OF DIVERSE STUDENTS

DR. ALICE WATKINS

Thirty years ago we were talking about the same issues and facing the same challenges regarding meeting the educational needs of children of color.

In 1985, the School of Education, California State University, Los Angeles, and Region C of the Los Angeles Unified School District launched a collaborative project for training prospective teachers. Region C serves the greater inner-city area and is the largest single employer of new teachers and emergency certified teachers of all regions of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

The goals of the project were to: (1) establish an off-campus training site for CSULA's student teachers in an educational community as similar as possible to communities where first-year teachers would work; (2) provide experiences for the faculty to learn about the needs of the pupils their students would teach in the future and thus effect changes in both curriculum and the on-campus curricular approaches; (3) provide personalized staff development for the on-site teachers based on their self-identified needs so they could become mentor teachers; (4) identify the most successful teachers and document, on videotape, the approaches they used that enabled children to become successful learners. Hopefully, the evaluation data from this model program will be used to effect changes in teacher education statewide.

That the existing staff had enormous needs, and teachers were not shy about identifying them, was one of the first things we learned from the project. Many, who had not completed any formal teacher education program, needed nurturing support. Often they had decided to become teachers after they had received their B.A. degrees, using extension courses for their teacher preparation. But even those with formal university training went through a program which assumed the child population had remained stable since the late 1940s. These

teachers struggle with textbooks written by authors who have not adjusted to current population shifts. Their training has not been appropriate to the children they serve. As a result, these teachers tend to assume that today's children are less capable.

We also discovered that the teacher's skill level varied as dramatically as the children's. One teacher requested help with reading instruction because she had so many nonreaders. After observing for two days, I realized that on paper the teacher had a beautiful lesson plan and an elaborate schedule of moving children from group to group in a three-group reading program. The children were moving from one group to the other, but everyone was using the same book and the same follow-up. The book itself was inappropriate for the class. We talked about the meaning of three-group reading, conducting an assessment, and organizing different kinds of reading lessons with the teacher. Then we formed five reading groups, and suddenly the students were no longer "educable mentally retarded" -- they were beginning to read!

Most successful teachers are themselves cognitively and intellectually talented. Children quickly identify teachers who are intellectually dull, and they take advantage of them. We need inner-city teachers who are capable of critical thinking and who are knowledgeable, well educated, and well read. The literature that suggests children from culturally diverse populations need to be taught to think critically is suspect. This skill is common to most children, especially children of poor families who instinctively learn to think critically, as a means of surviving. Often they can outthink their teachers, take over the classroom environment, and destroy the possibility of productive, successful instruction.

We also discovered that successful teachers take the time to acquaint themselves with the curriculum, both the scope and the sequence. They need to know how the skills taught at the first grade level relate to the fifth grade level in order to develop a more dynamic instructional program. They need some vision of what the Black or Hispanic child must achieve to successfully navigate junior and senior high. *Successful teachers also commit themselves to selecting*

materials and instructional methods that are free of racial, sex, and ethnic bias. Materials that portray Black, Hispanic, and Native American families as healthy units are limited but available. Other materials documenting what ethnic minorities have contributed to the growth of our country are also available.

Our best teachers are those who have good organizational and management skills. They seem to know how to orchestrate the movement of 30 students in a confined and unnatural space. They also tend to be more consistent in terms of discipline and less likely to use abusive punishment.

It can be argued that *open education is not appropriate for inner-city children* because it defies everything they have grown up with in terms of how their cultures managed time and space. They grow up confined to limited space and limited movement. Children from poor environments need and appreciate structure, organization, and predictable routine. *They appreciate clear communication about the freedoms they can enjoy and what their limitations are.*

It is necessary to individualize instruction, but this is not synonymous with remediation. The assumption that every child of color comes from a deficit background is a myth disproved by data from the Head Start studies. *Teachers must deeply believe that every child can, in fact, learn.*

Research showing that only 2 to 5 percent cannot learn in the classroom does not jibe with 27 to 40 percent of our people being unemployed or with only 7 percent of all students on the 19 California State University campuses in 1986 being Hispanic and 5 percent Black. Further, only 3 percent of teacher-training candidates were Black and 5 percent Hispanic. We have fewer children of color entering higher education now than we had before the civil rights movement.

For effective teachers in culturally diverse communities, we need intelligent people who understand the nature and complexities of curriculum building and classroom organization and are willing to

organize an instructional environment that is stimulating, challenging and age-appropriate for the child being served. We need teachers who genuinely believe and expect children to succeed.

Discussion

Teachers are products of schooling based on Anglo-Saxon Protestant mores that have become a part of the system. (This does not suggest that minority teachers are automatically more effective with minority students.) Teacher-training institutions perpetuate the same kind of teaching that has been going on for years, which does not prepare teachers to instruct all children. The teacher education model has to be changed.

Two principles underscore teacher education: (1) people do best what they are committed to do; (2) people perform best when they have choices. Inhibitions to realizing these principles include an educational system that believes tests truly measure the output of the system. This false idea and the system lead many students to feel inferior when, in fact, their developmental pace is different or the test does not accurately measure what it should.

A second inhibitor is a rigid curriculum when flexibility in curriculum and teacher education is what is necessary. In California, legislation locks teacher education into a 27-unit maximum. Can we really prepare effective teachers in 27 units? Also, teacher education programs have no control over or little involvement in and relationship with the general academic program that constitutes the other four years (or 120 units) of university work.

Some flexibility in the 27-units requirement allows for positive changes. At San Diego State University, for example, the teacher training program has added prerequisite coursework in cultural anthropology before students can enter the School of Education. *Until teacher educators work with teachers to examine their own cultural background, socialization and environment, teacher-training programs will not be successful.* Community involvement (on-site training)

during preservice is beneficial. Simply taking courses in multicultural education is not enough to develop true understanding. *Prospective teachers need to experience being in a school with people of different cultures.*

Teachers should be trained to implement authentic social studies programs in the early grades so that by junior high school students understand institutional racism and sexism. At present, public schools avoid all the issues associated with cultural diversity, making it a college-level phenomenon.

Recognizing the measurable and not so measurable competencies of a teacher who is effective for diverse student populations is essential at several key periods: (1) application to the teacher-training program, (2) participation in the teacher-training program, (3) hiring at the district level, (4) hiring at the site level, (5) classroom performance.

The screening process must begin with the university because school districts assume that the university has adequately screened and prepared teacher applicants.

Participants agreed that it is hard to identify prospective teachers with a negative attitude who might eventually demean minority children. Still, researchers should try to identify positive and negative attitudinal indicators and disseminate that information to teacher-training supervisors, personnel directors, and school administrators. Though technical competencies are valuable, interpersonal skills are most important.

The group offered the following as beginning indicators of teaching competence:

1. Class standing
2. Experiences with non-Anglos
3. Attitude toward equity issues
4. Attitude toward flexibility in delivering instruction

5. Knowledge of curriculum and learning theory

6. Expectations of Black, Hispanic and other minority students

7. Reasons for selecting teaching as a profession

CONCLUSION

The Roundtable discussion highlighted many important issues and strategies for better preparing teachers to successfully educate all children. All participants did not agree on all the points included in this synthesis. But most would likely have agreed with Dr. Watkins' observation: "I would not have dreamed 30 years ago that we would be discussing the issues that are at the forefront of our discussions as teacher educators in 1987. I never dreamed that we would be talking about the same issues and facing the same challenges, and made so little progress in terms of looking at the educational needs of children of color."

Dr. Josie Bain, Educational Professional in Residence, CRESST, University of California, Los Angeles, offered closing remarks to the Roundtable. Dr. Bain noted that "all of us have been raised and educated in a society whose culture encourages practices that create and maintain ethnic and sexual bias. The same Puritan value system that promoted the 'work-hard-and-you-will-be-successful' theory, also gave us Anglo-male centrism. But how much distance have we placed between that Puritan ethic and the attitudes and beliefs we carry into the classroom today? Many of us have not moved very far. These attitudes and beliefs are not always limited to a particular group. They permeate every race and every segment of our society."

Dr. Bain closed by quoting Ronald Edmond, known for his leadership in the effective schools movement, who said, "There has never been a time in the life of the American public school when we have not known all we needed in order to teach all those whom we choose to teach." What has historically been lacking, no less today than in the past, is the commitment and will to "choose to teach" all the children who enter our nation's schools.

The education of *all* students is now referred to as an issue of national defense. As universities prepare teachers for the nation's classrooms, three principles must underscore the teacher education

program: (1) the preparation of teachers is an all-university responsibility; (2) to function effectively, teachers must exhibit a willingness to select materials and instructional methods that are free of racial, sexual, and ethnic bias; and (3) the commitment to educating minority youth must be unequivocal.

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